

*To return Thanks for Mercies receiv'd,
the only Way to obtain future Blessings.*

A
SERMON,

PREACH'D

In the PARISH-CHURCHES

O F

Kirkby - Knowle and Thirkleby,
In **YORKSHIRE;**

In OCTOBER, 1747.

*An ORDER of His Majesty in Council,
to prevent the Spreading of the Di-
stemper amongst the Cattle, being
read; and the Sacrament of the
LORD'S-SUPPER administred at
the same Time.*

By *J. WIND*, M. A. Rector of *Kirkby-
Knowle*, and Curate of *Thirkleby*.

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M.DCC.XLVIII.





To the Parishioners
of *Kirkby-Knowle,*
and *Thirkleby,*

MY BRETHREN,

*AS the Distemper amongst
the Cattle daily ap-
proaches, I beg Leave to
recommend to your more
serious Perusal, what was
some Time since deliver'd
from the Pulpit. And
that it may have such an
Effect upon your Lives
and*

*and Conversations, as to
avert the severe Judg-
ments of Almighty God
with which you are threat-
ned, is the ardent Prayer of*

Your most affectionate,

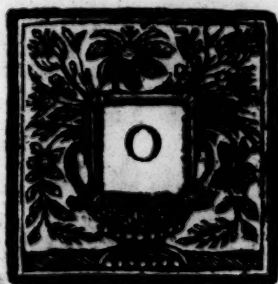
and faithful Pastor,

J. Wind.



PSALM CXXXvi, Ver. i.

*O give Thanks unto the Lord, for
he is good ; for his Mercy en-
dureth for ever.*



F all the Duties incum-
bent upon a Christi-
an, there is none more
agreeable to Reason,
none more suitable to
the Deity, than that of praising
his holy Name, for the manifold
Blessings of Life. This was the
Practice of the primitive Christians,
and what we ought to look upon
as the principal Part, both of our
private and publick Devotions.

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From

From hence the Commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, which was formerly celebrated every Lord's Day, was call'd by the Church, the *Eucharist*, or Feast of Thanksgiving: And sure with the utmost Propriety, when one great End of it was gratefully to remember the mighty Blessings and Benefits confer'd upon us, by his Death and Passion. The chief of which is, that we are thereby rescued from everlasting Death, and made capable of Life eternal: The Goodness of God being pleased to accept of the Suffering of his Son in our Stead, as a full Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World. And notwithstanding we are not so accurate in our Works as the Gospel requires, yet he will be pleased to accept of the Sincerity of our Hearts, instead of absolute Perfection.

Perfection in our Actions. But that we may *strive* to be *perfect*, even as our Father which is in Heaven is *perfect* *; he is graciously pleased to renew and confirm in us his assisting Grace, every Time we worthily receive the Holy Sacrament. So that we thereby become better enabled to do our Duty to God and Man; to bear both Prosperity and Adversity with a true Christian Temper of Mind; and to go through all the other Temptations of this sinful World, with an Heroic Bravery, becoming the Disciples of Jesus Christ.

But these are Blessings of so high a Nature, and of that Consequence to Mankind in general, that it is impossible but they must have often been duly weigh'd, by every one that calls himself a

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Christi-

* *Matthew* v. 48.

Christian ; and more particularly at this Time, before he presumes to come to this Holy Table. And they are Topics which I have so often expatiated on before upon this Occasion, that I will beg Leave, for the present, to follow the Example of the Holy Psalmist, in recounting the many temporal Blessings we enjoy, and making suitable Reflections on the more common Dispensations of Providence.

In the Words immediately following my Text, the Psalmist blesses God, for the Work of Creation ; who, *By Wisdom, made the Heavens, and stretched out the Earth above the Water, for his Mercy endureth for ever.* (Ver. 5. and 6.) A noble Instance indeed of the Goodness of the Deity, and truly worthy of the *God of Heaven !* This gracious Act has
afforded

afforded us a Proof of his Wisdom, Omnipotence, and Eternity, not to be contradicted by the most hardened Infidel; and in which all other Blessings are compris'd.

The Idols of the Heathen are Silver and Gold, the Work of Mens Hands. They have Mouths but they speak not; they have Ears but they hear not; neither is there any Breath in their Mouths. But Our God made great Lights, the Sun to rule by Day; the Moon and the Stars by Night; for his Mercy endureth for ever (V.8. 9.) These are productive of such numerous Blessings to Mankind, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the World itself could not contain the Books that should be written †. And these are Blessings so obvious*

* Psalm cxxxv, 15, 16, 17.

† John xxi, 25.

ous to the lowest Capacity, I presume it will be needless to spend much Time in remarking them: For who is so ignorant as not to know that Night and Day, Food and Raiment, Seed-Time and Harvest, and the Fruits of the Earth are produced in due Season, by the genial Warmth of the Sun? It is to this World, what the Soul is to the Body. Without the benign Influence of the One all Nature must stand still, our System be dissolv'd, and this our Planet lost in endless Night: And without that active and enlivening Quality of the Other, by which we are assured that *this Mortal shall put on Immortality*, it had been happy for us an eternal *Chaos* had always prevailed; for the Apostle very justly observes, *if in this Life only we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable.* 1 Cor. 15. 19.

To

To the Moon likewise, and the Stars, we are greatly indebted, for the late happy Improvements in Navigation ; a Science of infinite Use, as well as Profit, to this our Island. By this we enjoy all the Riches both of the Torrid and Frigid Zones, without enduring the scorching Heat of the one, or the severe Inclemency of the other. By this we procure the Gold of *Africa*, the Gums of *Arabia*, and fetch home Naval Stores from the *Pole*. In short, what is there produc'd in any Part of the Globe, for Use, Ornament, or Pleasure, that we do not enjoy in its utmost Extent ? Not to mention the infinite Riches redounding to ourselves, by scattering abroad the Superfluities of this our Land, which we are not able to consume. — For these Blessings, and many more, are
we

we indebted to those Luminaries, without whose friendly Aid and Assistance, it is utterly impossible to traverse the pathless, I had almost said impervious, Ocean. Let but the Moon withdraw her Light, and the Stars their Shining; what avails the Skill of the Pilot to bring him to the wish'd-for Haven? What has he then to depend upon, but God's good Providence, to rescue him from the Fury of the Winds, and to preserve him from being swallow'd up in the profound Abyss? Neither the Bulk nor Strength of the Ship, nor the Number of Hands, nor Skilfulness of the Mariners, are a sufficient Safe-guard; as we are but too well convinc'd, from the late fatal Experience of * a stupendous Specimen of the Art of Man. But great as it was, in the Hand of
Provi-

* The *Victory*, a First-Rate Man of War, lost in the Year 1744, wherein Admiral *Balchen*, with above a thousand Souls, perished.

Providence it was scatter'd like
 Dust before the Wind, and the
 Place thereof could no where be
 found.—Truly sorry I am, if
 this renew the Grief of any un-
 happy Widow, or unfortunate
 Orphan; — But it is necessary to
 point out the Steps Providence
 seems to have taken to bring us
 to Repentance.

Had we reason'd upon this great
 Calamity, as our Saviour did upon
 a similar Misfortune, which befel
 some of the Inhabitants of *Jeru-
 salem* in his Time, I am willing
 to hope it had been better for us.
*Those eighteen upon whom the
 Tower in Siloam fell, and slew
 them, think ye that they were Sin-
 ners above all Men that dwelt in Je-
 rusalem? I tell you nay; but except
 ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*
 Luke xiii. 4, 5.

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Had

Had we drawn the same Conclusion from the fatal Accident I have mention'd, and acted agreeable to our Saviour's Admonition, we might have hop'd the great Afflictions we have since labour'd under had never overtaken us. And if so, we should have had very great Reason to thank God for that his gentle Correction (for such I must beg Leave to call it) in Comparison of what this Nation has since suffer'd by the late horrid Rebellion, and the pestilential Distemper amongst the Cattle. But however severe God's Dealings with us may appear; yet still be assured it is for our Good, *for his Mercy endureth for ever.*

But to return to the Method pursu'd by the Psalmist, who not only proceeds to bless God, *for bringing Israel out of Egypt, with a strong*

*strong Hand and stretched-out Arm, dividing the Red Sea in two Parts, and making them pass through the Midst of it, but overthrowing Pharaoh and all his Host. — He then goes on to bless God, for slaying mighty Kings for their Sakes, Sihon King of the Amorites, and Og the King of Bashan, and giving their Land for an Heritage, even an Heritage unto Israel his Servant. — He likewise blesses God for remembering them in their low Estate, and redeeming them from their Enemies. * And concludes with a general Thanksgiving for his giving Food to all Flesh, O give thanks unto the God of Heaven, for his Mercy endureth for ever.*

And if we will but give ourselves Leave to attend and reflect

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* *Psalm cxxxvi, 11. and the following Verses.*

a little, I believe it will appear, that *we* have as much Reason as *they* had, to bless God for his manifold Mercies towards Us. For tho' he has not divided the Sea for us to pass through, to escape the Fury of our Enemies, yet he has been pleased to separate *us* from *them*, by an Ocean they have not hitherto been able to pass over; and which serves not only as a Bulwark against our Enemies, but, as I observ'd before, for an inexhaustible Fund of Riches to Ourselves.

Nations indeed have not been drove out, to give us their Land; but what a Blessing is it that Tyrants have not been permitted to rule over us! On the contrary, we are in that Respect, deservedly the Envy of all the Kingdoms upon Earth. So that we may be allow'd to cry out in Raptures of
Praise

Praise and Thanksgiving, . What Nation has so good a God as our God ? And what People blest'd with so gracious a Prince as Ours, His Vicegerent here below ?

The Goodness of God has hitherto been always pleased to remember our low Estate, and deliver us both from foreign and domestick Enemies, whenever they were likely to oppress us. Instances of this Kind are innumerable ; but none more particular than that of bringing about the Glorious Revolution in so miraculous a Manner, and establishing the present Royal Family upon the Throne of these Kingdoms with so little Bloodshed. — People of all Ranks are equally Partakers of these inestimable Blessings, and lie under equal Obligations of Duty and Gratitude, to give Thanks un-
to

to God for these his Mercies towards us.

And indeed, if we do but attend to the common Blessings of Providence, we shall find, that they are not less wonderful and astonishing; and the Goodness of God does not less shine forth in *them*, than in the greater Manifestations of his Power.

The Holy Psalmist does not forget to bless God for his giving Food to all Flesh. Let not then the Commonness of Health, Food, and Raiment, lessen the Value of these Things : For tho' the Goodness of God is such, that he denies those Blessings but to few of his Creatures ; yet, when he does think fit to with-hold them, he thereby inflicts the greatest temporal Punishment, rendering Life tasteless and insipid.

We

We are not, — we cannot, be fully sensible of the numberless Accidents and Dangers to which we are continually exposed; and from which the Divine Power and Foresight can only protect us. Yet if we do but estimate the Multitude of hidden Dangers hanging over our Heads, by the Variety of visible ones which we escape, we have surely great Reason to give Thanks unto the Lord for these his continual Mercies, — Mercies ever undeserved. — And this is a further Consideration to enhance their Value; — a further Consideration to induce us sincerely to reverence and adore the Giver. And if we have any Spark of Gratitude to our Benefactor, or any Sense of Shame, we shall make a suitable Return, by leaving Ungodliness, and all Worldly Lusts, and turning unto the Lord our God, with all our Hearts, and all our Souls.

But

But if your Minds are so dull as not to be affected with the common Dispensations of Providence, surely the extraordinary and publick ones, some of which I have already mention'd, cannot but rouse you out of this State of Insensibility.—Think on the Miseries and Calamities of our neighbouring Nations. — Think on the Outrages and Cruelties, necessarily attendant upon War, that Scourge of Mankind. — Think on the sacking of Towns, and the many and astonishing Barbarities consequent thereon, too gross to be mention'd in tender and compassionate Ears. Think but seriously, I say, on these Things, and then tell me whether you have not great Reason to be thankful? Nay, compare your own Situation with that both of the Northern and Southern Parts of this Kingdom ;

dom ; and consider, you, of this Part of the Country, were not harrafs'd with the late ruinous and destructive Infurrection ; nor have you, as yet, been impoverish'd by the present Pestilential Distemper amongst the Cattle : These are Things that nearly affect every one present. You cannot but be thoroughly sensible of the imminent Danger you are in. — You cannot but see inevitable Ruin to yourselves and Families, if this Plague is not stayed. — The Art of Man has hitherto been tried in vain. Of whom then must we seek for Succour but of Thee O Lord, who, for our Sins, art justly displeased. And who knows but *the Long-suffering of God, which waited in the Days of Noah while the Ark was preparing, may at this Time be waiting for us** ; and God grant that it may have a
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* I Pet. iii. 20.

better Effect upon *our* Lives and Actions than it had upon *theirs*. For I can see no Reason, why we of this Part of the Country should be more favourably dealt with than our Neighbours. Are we better than they?—Or have the Misfortunes which they have undergone had so much Influence upon us, as to make us live more Righteously and Godly than before?—Or rather, has not the gradual and slow Approach of the Distemper, lessen'd the Dread of it, and almost flatter'd us with the Hopes of escaping it, rather than fill'd our Churches, or kindled our Devotions into more fervent Zeal? Whatever you may think now, these are Things worthy your most serious Consideration; and God grant you may not one Day have too much Reason to be of my Mind.

Let

Let me then prevail with you to take hold of the present Opportunity (you that have not done it already) of breaking off your Sins by Repentance, and turning unto the Lord your God ; and who knows but his Anger may be turned away from you.

But if the Fear of Punishment can make no Impression upon you, let Gratitude, that distinguishing Characteristic of the Brave and Virtuous, induce you to make some Returns for God's great Goodness in giving you the late prodigious Increase, and the Fruits of the Earth in due Season, when many other Parts of *Europe* are threatned with a dreadful Famine, as well as harrafs'd with a ruinous War. These Blessings are particularly

calculated for the Capacity of the Husbandman; and if they have not the Effect which Providence seems to have intended, I am afraid our Punishment will be as singular as theirs.

Set now before your Eyes the Punishments threatned, and the Mercies already received; if neither of which can so work upon your Passion of Fear, or Love, as to make you amend your Lives, What have you to expect, but the fearful Looking for of Wrath to come? What have you to expect.— I tremble at the Thought. — But Plague, Famine, and the Sword, those Ministers of God's just Indignation and Anger? This, I am afraid, will be the Consequence of that Hardness of Heart I have been describing, but would not
be

be understood to insinuate, as if I thought it more particularly applicable to you than the rest of your Neighbours; yet it must be allow'd that these Considerations are proper Motives to strengthen the good Resolutions you are going to make; and to kindle your Devotions into more fervent Zeal of Praise and Thanksgiving.

We are commanded to shew forth God's Praise, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, that other Men seeing our good Works, may glorify our Father which is in Heaven. That we being an Example to others, may induce them to praise and glorify God, by the same Means,—by their Lives and Conversations: It is a Duty therefore incumbent upon every Man to take Heed to himself, not to derogate from God's Honour and Glory, or undermine Religion
by

by his Words or Writings; or idly squander away in Luxury and Excess the Blessings of Plenty.

The *Jews* were expressly commanded to lay up in Store, *Manna* against the seventh Day, when they were in the Wilderness, and also all Manner of Provision against the Sabbatical Year, because in that Year it was prohibited to till the Ground; Providence therefore was pleased to provide that every sixth Year should be more than ordinarily fruitful on that Account. Ought not we then, by Parity of Reason, to shew our Gratitude and Sense of God's Mercies, by laying up some Part of our Abundance in this Season of Plenty; lest it should please him to send us a Season of greater Scarcity? So that our Hearts may always rejoice, and, without repining, chearfully submit to his Will and Pleasure.

Besides,

Besides, we ought to remember, that it is neither agreeable to God's Wisdom or Goodness, always to indulge us with Plenty, but sometimes to correct us with Abstinence ; so that one plentiful Year is a natural Reason to expect the next less so, to temper the whole ; and I dare say, every one's own Observation will confirm this Manner of Reasoning.

Let not the Prodigal then pretend that this Way of acting is shewing a Distrust of God's providential Care over us, but what he absolutely expects from the rational Part of the Creation. Wherefore *Solomon* recommends a provident Insect as our Pattern.—*Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her Ways and be wise* *.

And

* *Proverbs*, vi. 6.

And this prudent Frugality is no less necessary to enable us to praise God in doing Acts of Charity, that most distinguishing Virtue of a Christian, without which all other Things are nothing worth, or rather in which all other Virtues are comprised. Happy then are they that have the Means of it in their Power, and happy are the Indigent, that God was pleased to make it a Duty in the Rich so necessary to Salvation. Both the Receiver therefore and the Giver, have great Reason to praise God for his Goodness towards them ; the One that he has been reliev'd, and the Other that he has it in his Power to exercise so God-like a Virtue. And surely in this Time of Plenty, and on the present Occasion, it is most natural to expect Charity to abound. The *Jews* were forbid to
begin

begin to reap their Corn, *before* they had offered one Sheaf and two Wave-Loaves to the Lord. And surely we shall be inexcusable if we make no Acknowledgments, *after* we have reap'd so plentiful a Harvest in so fine a Season. Let us not then neglect the present Opportunity, when our Hearts cannot but swell with Gratitude.

They are highly blamed in Scripture, who *regard not the Work of the Lord, nor consider the Operations of his Hands* (Pf. xxviii, 5.) ; who looketh not up to him, who sitteth in Heaven above, and beholdeth all the Dwellers upon Earth ; and ordereth every Thing that falls out among them, according to the Rules of a most exquisite and unsearchable Wisdom. The Passing over such Things without any Regard, is Robbing
God

God of the Glory of his Works,
and the Praise that is due to him ;
as well as depriving ourselves of
the Benefit and Comfort, that we
might, and ought to take in the
Performance of so excellent and
noble a Duty, as that of render-
ing Praise and Honour and Thankf-
giving to our Great Creator.

These are some, among many
other Motives not touch'd upon,
to induce us to be thankful unto
God, the Author and Giver of all
we possess. And the chief Way
to be so is, (as I hinted before) to
live Righteously and Godly in this
present World ; duly to receive
the Sacrament of the Body and
Blood of Christ, as often as we
can, with a thankful Remem-
brance of his Death, and to be
in Charity with all Men ; so shall
we be meet Partakers of these
Holy

Holy Mysteries. — *And Grant,
O Lord, that we may receive both
the ordinary and extraordinary
Benefits thereof; to Thy Honour
and Glory, and the Furtherance of
our own Salvation.*

F I N I S.

(31)
Holy Myrtles — And Grant
O Lord, that we may receive both
the ordinary and extraordinary
Benefits thereof 7 DE 65
and Glory, and the furtherance of
our own Salvation.

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